

**VIRGIN FALLS POCKET WILDERNESS  
CLASS II NATURAL-SCIENTIFIC STATE NATURAL AREA**

**COUNTY:** White

**7.5' QUADRANGLE:** Lonewood

**OWNERSHIP:** Bowater

**ACREAGE:** 317 Acres

**PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE:** Cumberland Plateau

**YEAR DESIGNATED:** 1973

**DESCRIPTION:** Virgin Falls Pocket Wilderness is 317 acre natural area located in White County. It is owned and managed by Bowater Incorporated. The natural area is named for Virgin Falls, which is formed by an underground stream that emerges from a cave that then drops over a 110 feet high cliff before disappearing into another cave at the bottom of the sink. The area is noted for its unique geologic features including several other waterfalls that include Big Laurel, Sheep Cave Falls, and Big Branch Falls. Caves at Virgin Falls include Big Laurel, Sheep Cave, and Virgin Falls Cave. Sinks here include the Virgin Falls Sink and Sheep Cave Sink. Sinkholes are characteristic karst features found on the Cumberland Plateau escarpment. The Caney Fork River and its tributaries drain the area. Martha's Pretty Point provides a dramatic view of Scott's Gulf and the Caney Fork River 900 feet below. The streams are noted for flash flooding, so keep up to date on the weather conditions before hiking into the area.

Virgin Falls is located within the greater Scott's Gulf region and adjacent to the Bridgestone/Firestone Centennial Wilderness Area. The deep gorges are heavily wooded and contain ecologically diverse, various aged second growth mixed mesophytic and oak hickory forest. Much of the upland in the area surrounding the access trail is planted loblolly pine. The access trail is outside of the natural area.

**SITE MANAGEMENT:** Bowater Forest Products Division, Calhoun Woodlands Operations, 5020 Highway 11 South, Calhoun, TN 37309, phone (423) 336-7205. Division of Natural Heritage, 401 Church Street, 14th Floor L&C Tower, Nashville, TN 37243-0447, phone (615) 532-0431.

**PUBLIC ACCESS:** Public access is allowed; parking and hiking trails are provided. The natural area is operated as a Bowater Pocket Wilderness Area and has 8 miles of hiking trails and backcountry camping.

**DIRECTIONS:** Virgin Falls is located southeast of Sparta. The natural area and pocket wilderness is accessed via Highway 70. In the community of DeRossett, eleven miles east of Sparta, turn onto Eastland Road (Mourberry Road) and proceed six miles to Scott Gulf Road. Turn onto Scott Gulf Road and proceed two miles to the parking area on the right side of the road.